UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

FIRST COMMITTEE
12th meeting
held on
Wednesday, 21 October 1992
at 10 a.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 12th MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. ELARABY	(Egypt)
later:	Mr. SUH (Vice-Chairman)	(Republic of Korea)
later:	Mr. ELARABY (Chairman)	(Egypt)
later:	Mr. SUH (Vice-Chairman)	(Republic of Korea)

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92-61544 2218V (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.1/47/PV.12
4 November 1992

ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

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GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ITEMS

Mr. ALLAGANY (Saudi Arabia) (interpretation from Arabic): In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

Mr. Chairman, my delegation is pleased to offer sincere congratulations to you on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee of the General Assembly. We are confident that, given your outstanding experience, your well-known sagacity and diplomatic skills, the deliberations of this Committee will lead to fruitful results. Our congratulations also go to other Officers of the Committee for their election to their respective posts.

The world today is in the grip of successive rapid changes at all levels, and the new world order is undergoing major transformations both in its foundations and its orientations in an unprecedented manner that has not been witnessed since the Second World War. In this context, the United Nations, in the work of the First Committee, has undertaken and continues to perform very important work in promoting international peace and security and effectively contributing to crystallizing collective positions that may achieve rational results that would reflect positively on the attainment of the noble goals enshrined in the United Nations Charter, in the context of the successive developments now taking place on the international arena.

In its statement in the General Assembly plenary meeting last month, my delegation set out its optimistic vision and voiced its deep faith in the elaboration of a new world order anchored in the principles of the United Nations Charter, the tenets of international law and the renunciation of the use or threat of use of force in the settlement of disputes. Given this Organization's effective role in consolidating international peace and

(Mr. Allagany, Saudi Arabia)

security, replacing war and devastation with cooperation between nations and peoples, furthering development, protecting the dignity of man and upholding human rights, my country has welcomed the Secretary-General's proposals aimed at enhancing the role of the Organization and increasing its effectiveness. His "Agenda for Peace" deserves special attention and profound objective analysis and study. The aim is to arrive at a formula that would enable the United Nations to play the role it was founded to perform, in response to the aspirations of its membership.

In this context, my delegation should like to underscore the necessity of strengthening the United Nations relations with regional organizations, in the interests of peace, security and stability in the world's regions. For example, I should like to refer to the constructive role that has been played and continues to be played by the Gulf Cooperation Council of the Arab States (GCC) in consolidating security in the region and in facing up to the challenges that face it.

Notwithstanding the aspersions that have been cast from time to time upon the performance of the Council, over the years it has demonstrated its resilience and its resolve to withstand and overcome the crises that have faced the region. The Gulf Cooperation Council reflects the collective will of the Gulf peoples and the solid foundation of their interrelationships and serves to fulfil their aspirations. The Council also represents a pillar of peace and security in the region and draws its strength from a belief in the common destiny of all its members and the inevitability of cooperation, independence and brotherliness in working towards the peace that is a vital need for our region.

(Mr. Allagany, Saudi Arabia)

The sensitive Gulf region has suffered during the past decade and the current one from very painful circumstances that took the shape of two wars. The adverse impact of the first, the Iraq-Iran War, went beyond the boundaries of the two parties involved in the fighting to affect some of the major concepts of security and stability in the region. The second was the war caused by the Iraqi regime when it occupied the State of Kuwait, posing a threat to the peace, sovereignty and security of the countries of the region; this conflict has also had significant adverse implications for the entire region. The important lesson to be drawn from the Kuwait crisis - that the major threat to the peace of the Gulf was regional rather than international - highlights the need for Member States to observe and respect international instruments, the principles of international law and the renunciation of force in the conduct of good-neighbour relations.

(Mr. Allagany, Saudi Arabia)

Recent events have shown that the security of the Gulf is a matter of vital importance to the international community as a whole and that that community does not waver when it comes to protecting its interests from threats posed by regional conditions. Therefore, anything that takes place in the Gulf region cannot take place in isolation from international political interaction and international considerations, especially under a new world order that is evolving in place of the former world order that has been in place since the Second World War. As a matter of fact, the pangs of birth of that new world order continue to cause a number of political, ethnic and factional upheavals and catastrophes in many parts of the world.

In the light of the recent events in the Gulf that stemmed from the international community's determination to protect the peoples of the region by way of containing the results of the Iraqi regime's policies, the apparent determination of the Islamic Republic of Iran to extend its dominion over Abu Mousa and other Arab islands in the Gulf, regardless of existing agreements and the repeated declarations that Iran has no expansionist designs that may constitute any threat to its "brothers" in the Gulf and that Iran's only wish is to spare the Gulf the dangers of foreign intervention does not serve the region's interests and does not promote the development of Iran's Gulf relations.

We hope that Iran will play a constructive role that will enable the peoples of the region to live in peace, security and prosperity and spare the region the effects of any action that may bring to mind the spectre of expansionist policies that have dogmatic, ethnic and political overtones and that run counter to the spirit of the new era and the thrust of the Gulf States' endeavours to consolidate peace and security in the region.

(Mr. Allagany, Saudi Arabia)

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has done and is still doing its best to spare the region the ravages of war and upheaval. It is no secret that my Government pursues a clear policy that emanates from its deep belief in the need to spare the region the banes of any regional or international conflict. It is common knowledge that Saudi Arabia has never been an advocate of war or a source of threat or aggression against any other State, and that we reject the logic of force in international relations.

Given Saudi Arabia's peace-loving policy, the Kingdom has acceded to and observed the provisions of the non-proliferation Treaty and has incessantly urged the international community to renounce the use of chemical, bacteriological and all weapons of mass destruction.

It is fear and the feeling that they are threatened that prompts nations and peoples to acquire armaments and to form alliances to fend off the greed and feuds of their adversaries, who might pose a threat to their sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and vital interests. Therefore, justice requires that we concede that States have a legitimate right to resort to the means whereby they can guarantee their security and survival as States and protect the lives and interests of their peoples in line with the provisions of the United Nations Charter. This has become an established principle in international relations and has been enshrined in treaties, conventions and practices concluded under and approved by international law.

Contrary to that principle, the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is such that the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina have been made the victims of blatant aggression that threatens their very survival as a people and as a State even though that State is a Member of the United Nations. This aggression takes the form of mass murder, destruction, displacement and

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"ethnic cleansing". Such practices are a blot on the face of humanity, especially in the light of the failure of all international efforts to bring peace to that tortured land, stop the killing and curb the aggressor that stops at nothing. Every brutal means at hand is being used to subjugate and terrorize the peaceful people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who seek only respect for their rights and sovereignty for their State, just like any other State Member of the United Nations.

It is our hope, as we stand at the threshold of a new era, and given the current international developments, that the ongoing peace talks between the Arab States and Israel will produce a glimmer of hope that may point at the achievement of a comprehensive and durable peace for the entire region and a just solution to the question of Palestine. The success of the peace process clearly depends on Israel's genuine commitment to implement the resolutions of the international community and withdraw from all the occupied Arab territories, especially the Holy City of Al-Quds, which Muslims will never give up, no matter how long it may take.

Security of nations cannot be achieved by war, devastation and strife. More than ever before international cooperation is essential in today's world and this cooperation must arise from genuine good will because peace can never be achieved if hidden intentions are at work and are much more potent than any declared position.

Security is the product of confidence, confidence is the product of solidarity, and solidarity is the product of credibility. Without these postulates, no international peace or security will be possible and no solidarity will be achieved. It is our common responsibility as peoples and nations to shoulder the burden of building our future by avoiding the mistakes of the past, adopting a pragmatic, realistic and rational outlook, in dealing

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with the issues facing the world today, in a manner that is free from chauvinism and hegemonism, with a view to ensuring fraternity, confidence, trust and understanding through adherence to international instruments and the principles and common goals of the international community within constructive frameworks that serve the interests of mankind, justice and international legality.

Mr. HOU Zhitong (China) (interpretation from Chinese): At the outset please allow me to express on behalf of the Chinese delegation warm congratulations to you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee of the current session of the General Assembly. I also wish to congratulate the other officers of the Committee on their election. I am confident that given your outstanding ability and rich diplomatic experience, you, Sir, will guide this Committee to success in its work. Meanwhile I should like to thank the previous Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Mroziewicz of Poland, for his contribution.

Since the last session of the United Nations General Assembly major events have occurred one after another in international relations and the world situation has undergone profound changes. The international community has finally rid itself of the old world pattern characterized by the confrontation between the East and West military blocs. The world, developing in the direction of multipolarity, has embarked on a new historical phase. Peace and development are still the present-day world's two main subjects of interest.

However, world peace and tranquillity, which the international community avidly longs for, have not automatically descended following the demise of the cold war. Owing to serious imbalances of forces in the world, contradictions concealed in the past have intensified and the North-South disparities have become more prominent. In addition, old and new contentions and disputes interweave with one another. All these make the world still more turbulent and volatile and have given rise to fierce armed conflicts. The existence of hegemonism and power politics is still the principal obstacle to the resolution of questions of peace, security and development.

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Faced with a complicated and turbulent international situation, the people of the world even more urgently demand the dismantling of the old unequal world order and more strongly call for the establishment of a new world order. A peaceful, stable, just and rational new world order, including an equal and mutually beneficial new world economic order, should be built upon the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence. Only in this way can countries in the world pursue common development in an international environment of enduring peace and security. We firmly believe that as the world develops in the direction of multipolarity, such a new international order will ultimately be established.

With the changes in the world structure, some progress has been made in the field of arms control and disarmament. The United States and the Russian Federation have ratified their Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START Treaty) and reached an understanding on further reducing their strategic nuclear arsenals. Not long ago, the United States announced that it would withdraw tactical nuclear weapons from overseas, and the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) began to be implemented. The international community welcomes these positive developments and hopes that the parties concerned will faithfully implement the agreements and understandings they have reached. In the meantime people have also realized that there is still a long way to go in disarmament, and even after the above steps of arms reduction are completed, the reality will remain unchanged that the two military Powers possess the largest and most advanced nuclear arsenals, sophisticated weaponry and the capability for developing space weapons. Therefore, they still have special responsibility

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for disarmament. The international community urges them to further drastically reduce their nuclear arsenals, destroy the nuclear warheads that have been cut, halt the upgrading, production and deployment of nuclear weapons and stop developing space weapons.

Complete prohibition on and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons is what the Chinese Government has consistently stood for, and is the urgent aspiration and fundamental objective of the international community as well. In order to achieve this ultimate goal, it is necessary to take some transitional measures now. In this regard, China is ready to put forward the following proposals.

First, all nuclear-weapon States should follow China's lead in making the commitment not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, and unconditionally not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones. An international agreement should be reached in this regard.

Secondly, all other nuclear-weapon States should support, as China has done, the proposal for establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, should respect the status of such zones that already exist, and undertake corresponding obligations. We also urge the countries that have deployed nuclear weapons abroad to withdraw all these weapons immediately.

Thirdly, all the countries that have space capabilities should observe the principle of the peaceful use of outer space, should immediately stop the research, testing, production and deployment of space weapons, and should not introduce weapon systems into outer space.

As a nuclear-weapon State, China has unilaterally and unconditionally assumed corresponding obligations in these important areas and made its own contributions. We hope that the other nuclear-weapon States will do likewise.

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Proceeding from its principled position for a complete prohibition on and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons, the Chinese Government has consistently supported and participated in the international community's efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Out of its support for the purposes and objectives of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and taking into consideration the aspirations of non-nuclear-weapon States, China officially acceded to the Treaty last March.

The non-proliferation Treaty is one of the most universally accepted international instruments in the field of arms control. Although not free from defects and inadequacies, it plays a positive role in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. A conference of the parties to the Treaty will be held in 1995. We are ready to take part in the work of its preparatory committee with a constructive attitude.

We believe that in order to increase the universality of the non-proliferation Treaty and strike a balance between the rights and obligations of its States parties, it is of the utmost importance for the major nuclear-weapon Powers to accelerate the process of nuclear disarmament and abandon the policy of nuclear deterrence; for all nuclear-weapon States to provide security assurances to non-nuclear States and unconditionally undertake the obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons; for States with a nuclear industry capability to promote actively international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy to the benefit of the economic and social development of various countries, especially developing countries; and for the international non-proliferation regime to be strengthened with the full participation of non-nuclear-weapon States.

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China has always supported the demands for establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace made by relevant countries in various regions on the basis of voluntary consultations. In the meantime, we have advocated all along that the nuclear-weapon States should respect the status of nuclear-weapon-free zones and assume corresponding obligations. This is an effective measure, conducive to the security and stability of various regions and to the promotion of nuclear disarmament. On the basis of that principled position, China has signed and ratified the relevant additional Protocols to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean and the South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone Treaty, and we support the proposals for establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in Africa, the Middle East, South Asia and the Korean peninsula.

At this point I wish to state that the Government of China supports the efforts of the special Conference held recently by the States parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco for improving the Treaty's universality and effectiveness and reaffirms the obligations China has undertaken in relation to the Treaty. Meanwhile we appreciate the recent ratification by France of Additional Protocol I to the Treaty.

After many years of negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament, an international convention has finally been concluded on the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of chemical weapons, thereby laying down an international legal basis for eliminating globally this entire category of weapons of mass destruction. As a non-chemical-weapon State that has been deeply victimized in the past by foreign chemical weapons, China has consistently stood for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of all chemical weapons and the production facilities thereof. By attaching

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great importance to and taking an active part in the negotiations on the chemical-weapons Convention, we have made our own contributions.

Although the present draft Convention still suffers from certain defects, inadequacies and imbalanced contents, we believe that its purposes and objectives, namely the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of chemical weapons, should enjoy the broad approval and support of the international community. Therefore, China joined the consensus on the draft Convention at the Conference on Disarmament and agreed that the draft Convention be submitted to the General Assembly at its current session for deliberation. In the meantime, in its statement of positions, China also expressed its concerns and reservations over the defects of the draft Convention, as well as its hope that these defects will be resolved appropriately. In China's view, complete achievement of the basic objectives of the draft Convention and the realization of a chemical-weapon-free world will undoubtedly be of positive significance to maintaining international peace and security.

Disarmament and arms control directly concern every country's rights and interests as well as international peace and security. Therefore, all the countries of the world, big or small, strong or weak, have the right to participate on an equal footing in the discussions and settlement of such issues, rather than let them be monopolized or manipulated by a few big Powers. In order to enhance international peace and security and to promote the disarmament process, hegemony and power politics must be completely removed from international relations, and all States should strictly observe the United Nations Charter and other norms of international relations so as to ensure full respect for every country's sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and security.

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We oppose the attempt of any country to interfere in and obstruct normal cooperation between sovereign States under the pretext of preventing arms proliferation. We strongly reject the blatant violation of the United Nations Charter, of other norms of international relations and even of one's own commitment to international agreement through gross interference, by means of arms transfers, in another country's internal affairs. Such a practice of double standards and breach of faith in the field of arms control is typical of hegemony and power politics and is detrimental to international peace, security and stability.

The Asian and Pacific region is relatively stable politically and is undergoing sustained economic development. As an Asia-Pacific country, China attaches great importance to maintaining security and stability in the region and to developing friendly relations with neighbouring countries. To these ends, we have made unremitting efforts. China has consistently pursued an independent foreign policy of peace, with safeguarding national independence and sovereignty and promoting world peace and development as its basic objectives. China does not seek hegemony or any sphere of influence, nor does it seek to establish mllitary bases abroad. Neither do we station a single soldier overseas, or pose a threat to any other country. China is a firm force for peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region and in the world at large.

With a view to promoting general and complete disarmament and security in the Asia-Pacific region, China holds the following views.

First, in developing relations with one another, Asia-Pacific countries should strictly abide by the United Nations Charter and the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, should respect each other, treat each other with sincerity, cooperate with one another on an equal footing and live in amity.

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Secondly, no Asia-Pacific country should seek regional or subregional hegemony or establish a sphere of influence, set up or participate in a military bloc directed against other countries, build military bases on foreign soil, or station its troops abroad. Nor should it infringe the sovereignty and territorial integrity or interfere in the internal affairs of other countries under whatever pretext.

Thirdly, all of the Asia-Pacific countries should commit themselves to developing good-neighbourly and friendly relations. They should settle territorial and border disputes as well as other problems left over from the past through peaceful consultations instead of resorting to force or the threat of the use of force. In that regard, peaceful negotiations may be conducted when conditions are ripe; otherwise, a dispute or problem may be shelved until conditions become ripe.

Fourthly, none of the Asia-Pacific countries should engage in an arms race in any form. The defence capabilities of each country should be kept at a level commensurate with its legitimate defence needs.

In our view, in order to promote peace, security and stability in the Asia-Pacific region, efforts should be made first of all at the bilateral level to promote dialogue and take action so as to increase trust, reduce tensions, settle disputes and enhance security, thus leading step by step to the establishment and development of a suitable mechanism of dialogue for regional and subregional security. We are willing to work together with the relevant countries to further improve the environment of peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region.

The task facing the First Committee at the current session of the United Nations General Assembly is both important and arduous. Here, I should like

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to assure you that the Chinese delegation, with a positive and constructive attitude, will closely cooperate with you and other delegations in the consideration of our agenda items and make its own contribution to the success of the work of the First Committee and to further progress in the field of security and disarmament.

Mr. PISKOUNOV (Russian Federation) (interpretation from Russian): First of all, I should like to join those who have congratulated you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee and to express my best wishes to the other officers of the Committee. I am confident that under your able leadership, Mr. Chairman, our work will be conducted in a constructive spirit and will achieve significant results. For my part, I wish to assure you of the total support of the Russian delegation.

The forty-seventh session of the General Assembly is being held in the context of radical changes in all aspects of the life of the world community. In these circumstances Russia sees the role of the United Nations as being primarily that of dealing effectively with the existing and new challenges to the world and serving as the main driving force for the development of global cooperation and security. Today the common task for all of us is not only to secure what we have achieved but also to move forward along the road of further improving the system for keeping the peace and maintaining stability on the basis of the Charter of the United Nations.

The present renaissance of the United Nations necessitates new approaches to deliberations on many agenda items, including those that relate to questions of international security. Those questions must be given new content reflecting the realities of a post-confrontation world. Accordingly, the Russian delegation believes that attention should be given to the substance of decisions taken by the General Assembly, in particular that of decisions on the agenda item "Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security".

My delegation envisages a concise yet comprehensive resolution containing concrete ideas on means of enhancing the peace-keeping capabilities of the

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United Nations and of its main organs and ensuring stability and predictability in international relations. Such an approach would enable us to build a more pragmatic base for deliberations on security issues and would give additional impetus to the efforts of the United Nations to secure lasting security for all.

The efforts of the United Nations over the past year in the area of conflict and crisis settlement have brought tangible results. The Organization has acted more assiduously and sweepingly than ever before and has aroused great expectations for the resolution of conflicts and economic, social, environmental and humanitarian problems.

In addition, we have new hope regarding the implementation of the proposals contained in the Secretary-General's report "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277). My delegation sees those proposals as an earnest attempt to find on a collective basis adequate solutions for the emerging problems of international security. In our view, their special value lies in the search for effective ways to strengthen the preventive capabilities of the United Nations in forestalling the emergence of new hotbeds of tension.

In Russia's opinion, the realization of those objectives would be facilitated by the establishment of hot lines to United Nations Headquarters, the dispatch of mediation missions and the development of fact-finding methods, as well as by the creation of demilitarized zones, humanitarian corridors and zones of tranquillity.

It appears that the development of a reliable collective-security system requires further improvement of the anti-crisis machinery of the United Nations, ranging from more effective use of ways and means for the pacific

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settlement of disputes to decisive enforcement measures aimed at restoring international peace and security in accordance with Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.

The joint responsibility of the civilized world should also be demonstrated where large-scale violations of human rights - in particular, of the rights of minorities - occur.

Recent experience in Europe, Africa, Asia and Central America has demonstrated the importance of clear coordination and correlation between the peacemaking efforts of the United Nations and those of regional organizations. This would help to give real substance to the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter. Regional organizations can and should make a greater contribution to the maintenance of peace, help to defuse ethnic and religious conflicts and respond to humanitarian emergencies.

Security issues are inextricably linked to the problems of arms limitation and reduction. Disarmament remains one of Russia's top priorities. Our country will comply strictly with all the obligations of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics under bilateral and multilateral agreements in this sphere that are now in force or have been signed.

Today efforts to reduce armed forces and armaments are aimed not at regulating the qualitative and quantitative parameters of armaments, as was formerly the case, but at ensuring mutual security in accordance with the new understanding of military and strategic parity as equality of security rather than equality of mutual threat.

This approach underlies our long-term military-political and military-strategic policies as described in the message sent on 27 January 1992 by the

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President of the Russian Federation to the Secretary-General. In full conformity with that document, Russia will organize its armed forces in such a manner that they cannot be used for purposes other than defence of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the State and peace-keeping activities in pursuance of decisions taken by the international community.

We shall strive to reduce strategic nuclear forces to the minimum level that will guarantee the prevention of war, removing any incentive for a disabling first strike.

Russia supports the complete elimination, under effective supervision, of nuclear and all other types of weapons of mass destruction. Our country steadfastly supports the adoption of effective measures to strengthen the regime of non-proliferation of nuclear and other types of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

We advocate maximum mutual openness and predictability, as well as confidence-building measures in the military sphere, including military doctrines, defence budgets, plans for the organization and activities of the armed forces and international trade in weapons.

Russia is willing to cooperate in the elaboration of additional measures to avert the outbreak of war through accident, miscalculation or terrorism and to prevent military incidents. We shall help and participate in the creation of collective security structures on the basis of the Charter of the United Nations.

On the basis of these long-term objectives, the Russian Federation intends to pursue active policies in all areas of the disarmament process, both in cooperation with our partners and unilaterally.

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A convincing example of this approach and a radically new step in the area of weapons monitoring was the Joint Understanding reached at Washington by the Presidents of Russia and the United States on further substantial reductions in strategic offensive weapons. That Joint Understanding represents a logical extension of the Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START Treaty) and the Lisbon Protocol to it. It has become a practical reflection in the military sphere of the radically new pattern of relations between Russia and the United States and of a different role for those two Powers in the world. For the first time, an understanding has been built not on the basis of arithmetical equality but on the basis of reasonable sufficiency. This circumstance is significant as a matter of principle, and we hope that it will have a positive effect on the position of other nuclear Powers and on the strengthening of strategic stability and international security as a whole.

Naturally, the priority task now is, in our view, the implementation of these major agreements: we must see to it that the START Treaty and the Lisbon Protocol to it are ratified by all the participating States and that the Washington Joint Understanding on further reductions in strategic offensive armaments is expressed in treaty form.

Progress is being made in other areas of disarmament as well. The Russian Parliament has ratified the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty), and that Treaty entered into force in July 1992 by decision of the participating States. As a result of the reductions provided for in the Treaty and of other measures, it will be possible to reduce to a minimum - indeed, practically eliminate - the threat of a surprise attack or

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of large-scale offensive operations in Europe. The entry into force of the Treaty opens prospects for the creation of a reliable and comprehensive collective security system based on trust and cooperation between all European States, the United States and Canada.*

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* Mr. Suh (Republic of Korea), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

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The conditions of today are opening broad new opportunities for real progress in all areas of disarmament, including disarmament within the framework of a multilateral process. It is imperative to adapt that process to contemporary needs and to strengthen its independent role by ensuring that it is compatible with and complementary to negotiating formats and unilateral measures.

Issues involving the non-proliferation of all types of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems and the strengthening of existing non-proliferation regimes are now coming to the forefront of multilateral efforts.

Activities in this connection are aimed mainly at strengthening the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and making it a universal agreement of unlimited duration. That is indeed the main objective of the 1995 NPT Review Conference.

We welcome the accession of France, China, South Africa and a number of other States to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and also the appropriate safeguards commitments made by Argentina and Brazil.

Russia considers it extremely important that the disintegration of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics should not result in a deterioration of the situation in the area of non-proliferation. The commitments of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine to accede to the NPT as non-nuclear States as soon as possible are of fundamental importance in that context.

The United Nations should continue to devote attention to the problems of further enhancing the regime of security guarantees for non-nuclear-weapon States. Russia, as the successor to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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with respect to its membership in the United Nations and the Security Council and its participation in international treaties, reaffirms the statement made by the Soviet representative in the Security Council on 17 June 1968 on the question of positive safeguards. We also consider it appropriate for the General Assembly to recommend to the Conference on Disarmament that it should speed up the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Negative Security Assurances in order to encourage the search for universally acceptable practical solutions in this area. One could consider, for example, developing more compatible, even if not completely identical, formulas of safeguards for non-nuclear States.

In our opinion, the United Nations can make a substantial contribution to creating efficient international machinery to monitor the production and export of fissionable materials. In particular, the General Assembly could express its support for the early preparation of an international agreement on the cessation of the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes. We favour the immediate inclusion of these issues in the negotiating process.

The Russian Federation welcomes the decision by the United States to abandon the production of plutonium and highly enriched uranium for nuclear-weapons purposes. For its part, the Russian Federation confirms its intention to continue implementing the programme of decommissioning the remaining Russian weapons-grade plutonium production facilities. Our proposal to the United States to initiate talks immediately on the supervised cessation of the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes also remains open.

We believe that the United Nations could, as early as today, participate actively in efforts to strengthen the system for monitoring the export of

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missiles and missile technology. Along with the improvement and formalization of existing structures for monitoring in this area, the time has come for a comprehensive study of ways to establish a new international verification machinery in which both supplier States with a developed technological base and States that are interested in gaining access to missiles and missile technology for peaceful uses would participate.

With regard to the regulation and limitation of international arms deliveries, the United Nations can make a substantial contribution to the universalization of the Guidelines for Conventional Arms Transfers approved by the permanent members of the Security Council. We consider it important to develop the practice of harmonizing the activities of the Five in the area of arms sales, and also to consider these issues further in the United Nations and in the Conference on Disarmament.

Completion of work in the United Nations on the Register of Conventional Arms provides an opportunity for as many countries as possible to participate in the evolving arms-sales verification regime. Such participation will help to establish an atmosphere of openness and trust in this area.

Russia confirms that it intends, beginning in 1993, to provide annual data in accordance with the requirements of the Register.

At the present stage, the United Nations can, it appears, play a significant role in promoting contacts between arms-producing States with a view to developing unified approaches to arms sales and harmonizing their national systems of export supervision.

The link between the strengthening of the non-proliferation regime and measures for regional and subregional disarmament is becoming increasingly apparent. These measures should form an integral part of the evolving United

(Mr. Piskounov, Russian Federation)

Nations system of preventive diplomacy and a vital element in maintaining regional stability. Accordingly, the United Nations could play a more active role in searching for the best possible methods of guaranteeing security, with emphasis on reducing the military capabilities of States in different regions.

The United Nations could also provide considerable assistance in improving the effectiveness of regional-security processes on the basis of a comprehensive approach that would include, among other things, enhanced multilateral efforts in the area of non-proliferation of all types of weapons of mass destruction, combat missiles and missile technology, control and limitation of international arms transfers and strengthening confidence-building measures and openness in the military sphere.

The issues of the nuclear complex continue to be important in United Nations efforts. Consideration of those issues should be revitalized and given concrete content, and we should abandon declaratory statements and any remnants of ideological stereotyping. At this stage, we should aim at harmonizing the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the remaining nuclear potentials in accordance with the requirements of minimum reasonable sufficiency within the framework of a consistent and phased movement towards a nuclear-free world.

Further rapprochement of the positions of different countries on limiting nuclear tests, to the point of their complete cessation, is becoming increasingly important. Russia favours immediate initiation of the elaboration of an appropriate international agreement involving all States. The one-year moratorium declared in October 1991 is evidence of our position.

I would also recall that in April of this year, the Russian Supreme Soviet called on other nuclear Powers to follow Russia's example and suspend

(Mr. Piskounov, Russian Federation)

nuclear tests. We welcomed the decisions by France and thereafter by the United States to suspend nuclear testing.

In this connection, I would like to inform the members of the Committee that on 19 October President Boris Yeltsin signed a decree extending the Russian moratorium to 1 July 1993. If the other nuclear Powers follow the example of Russia, France and the United States, there will be a real prospect of realising the long-held dream of mankind to ban nuclear tests for all time. Russia favours initiating without delay discussions concerning the drafting of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear tests.

Today the world community is on the verge of concluding a Convention on the prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons. I would like to believe that when that question is discussed at this session, we shall be able to take the necessary responsible and constructive approach that will enable all States, without exception, to accede to the Convention.

(Mr. Piskounov, Russian Federation)

At the current session we shall consider the Secretary-General's study on defensive security and concepts policies. In our view, the recommendations contained in the study lay a foundation for continuing multilateral discussions in the United Nations and for further examination of these issues in other formats. They also outline practical steps for implementing defence policies that would guarantee security both at the global level and for individual States.

Together with other countries that have participated in this work, the Russian delegation intends to sponsor a draft resolution on the study, and we trust that the draft will receive broad support.

We consider verification issues to be an important area of United Nations activities and favour the elaboration, under the Organization's auspices, of a comprehensive international verification strategy and appropriate multilateral mechanisms. Today there is a growing consensus in the world community on the role, format and methods of verification activities. Russia is ready for further discussion of any principles and proposals aimed at developing international cooperation in this area. Our ideas and comments on verification are to be found in the letter from the Permanent Mission of Russia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General.

The examination of conversion issues at this session should, in our opinion, be aimed at elaborating specific practical recommendations and programmes. Russia favours the creation of special United Nations machinery on conversion issues with the participation of the major industrialized countries and other interested States. It would coordinate and integrate the efforts of Governments, non-governmental organizations and the business community within the context of converting the military industry.

(Mr. Piskounov, Russian Federation)

We welcome international cooperation on conversion, and we intend to encourage it by establishing a "most favoured" regime and providing tax incentives for appropriate projects.

At this juncture in our history, the impact of scientific and technological advances on international security is increasing dramatically. States Members of the United Nations should be focusing their efforts on averting a qualitative arms race and facilitating access for all countries to the achievements of scientific and technological progress for peaceful purposes. We deem it necessary to prevent any negative impact of scientific advances, to use those advances for constructive purposes and to highlight the potential of science and technology for maintaining international security in the context of the relationship between scientific and technological progress, disarmament, development and environmental protection.

The time has come to take a new look at the machinery of multilateral disarmament. The triad that has evolved in this area - the First Committee of the General Assembly, the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament - obviously needs further restructuring and streamlining.

We welcome the fact the issues of disarmament and international security are being taken up together in the deliberations of the First Committee, and we are prepared to assist in further rationalizing the Committee's activities, in particular by streamlining the agenda and abandoning confrontational draft resolutions that do not reflect the realities of today.

Our approach to the consideration of issues of multilateral disarmament is based on pragmatism, concentration on tangible results, readiness for reasonable compromises and cooperation with all States. We expect this session to do productive work and to take practical decisions in consonance with present-day realities in the areas of disarmament and security.

Mr. MISNUMURTI (Indonesia): This year's session of the First Committee is being held against the backdrop of some encouraging developments in arms limitation and international security. Of particular importance in this regard is the conclusion of the negotiations on the Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START Treaty) negotiations and the agreement reached last June between the two major Powers in bilateral nuclear-arms reductions. We hope that other nuclear-weapon States will participate in these endeavours and thereby rid the world of the dangers posed by the nuclear menace. The Open Skies Treaty, providing for unarmed surveillance flights, constitutes an important contribution to enhancing security and confidence between its signatories. Moreover, three of the five nuclear-weapon States have announced moratoriums on nuclear-weapon testing. Other tangible steps include accession by a number of countries to the non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the decisive progress made in the complex field of verification as well as in the on-site inspection provisions which are now included to ensure compliance with agreements. Meanwhile, the negotiations initiated two decades ago on a chemical weapons convention have finally been brought to a successful conclusion.

The Tenth Summit Conference of the of non-aligned countries, held in Jakarta last month, welcomed the broadening and deepening of the dimensions of disarmament and security. Far from merely regulating armaments and the arms race, agreements now include the destruction of existing arsenals as well as limits on future production. The Summit Conference expressed the hope that these developments, which are creating a new global environment, would lead to the renunciation of strategic doctrines and thereby contribute to global security.

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

The Summit Conference also noted, however, that the disarmament agenda is largely unfinished. A nuclear-weapon-free world, which alone can ensure human survival, has always been the vision of the Non-Aligned Movement and is the collective responsibility of all States. We have urged accelerated efforts on other disarmament issues, particularly the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction. Strategic doctrines continue to cast their shadow across the globe, while the world is still threatened by existing arsenals which are being further refined. The Summit Conference called for a new world order free from the fear of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and based on the principles of peaceful coexistence, non-use of force, non-intervention and non-interference.

The Jakarta Summit Conference underscored the depressing impact of military expenditures on the world economy and on national economies. The Non-Aligned Movement has consistently maintained that resources released through disarmament and arms reductions should be directed towards social and economic development, especially in developing nations. The establishment of such a productive linkage between disarmament and development will also make it possible to attain security at lower levels of armaments.

We should now recognize that peace and security can no longer be defined solely in military terms but demand a multifaceted approach. The vast array of non-military threats that make up the global agenda must be taken into account in our efforts to achieve a stable and peaceful world. Without economic progress and social advancement, the eradication of illiteracy, poverty, and hunger and malnutrition will be in jeopardy, as will stable population growth, a safe environment and global security.

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

At the same time, there is a growing recognition that the sources of security concerns are often regional; an appropriate framework for achieving positive results would take into account geopolitical, historical, cultural and other concerns of the States in a particular region or subregion. In this context, the Jakarta Summit Conference called for regional dialogues to promote security and to enhance economic, environmental, social and cultural cooperation. Such an approach could facilitate the initiation of arms-reduction negotiations between adversaries in some regions. The Summit Conference also expressed the belief that regional and global approaches to disarmament complement and reinforce each other and should be pursued with a view to enhancing security for all nations.*

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* The Chairman returned to the Chair.

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

The specific characteristics of chemical weapons and the indiscriminate nature of their destructive effects have long been a serious concern of my Government. In 1979, Indonesia, with the cooperation of the Netherlands, embarked on the destruction of chemical weapons agents left over from the Second World War. It is therefore most gratifying to my delegation to note the successful conclusion of a draft Convention banning chemical weapons. It has demonstrated that a consensus is possible despite the political and technical complexities of the issues involved. The draft Convention is comprehensive in scope, non-discriminatory in nature, with built-in safeguards and contains far-reaching provisions on destruction and verification. Above all, it prohibits an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. We particularly welcome the Convention, as it is a major achievement that will benefit the international community, including the third world countries, which are most vulnerable to the use of chemical weapons. This achievement is also a source of satisfaction to my delegation, inasmuch as Indonesia actively contributed to the negotiating process in the Conference on Disarmament leading to the adoption of the draft Convention.

It is essential in this connection to emphasize, however, that international trade and cooperation in the chemical sector for development purposes should not be constrained by unilateral and discriminatory restrictions. Rather, the developed countries should provide the developing countries with greater access to adequate technology, materials and equipment for peaceful purposes.

Given the fact that nearly seven decades have elapsed since the adoption of the Geneva Protocol, the coming into force and the universal participation in the Convention banning chemical weapons will constitute a historic

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

milestone. It will also be a major achievement by the Conference on Disarmament. My delegation hopes that with the necessary political will, the Conference on Disarmament will not fail to take advantage of this momentum and initiate negotiations on other items on its agenda, especially the question of a comprehensive test ban and other priority issues.

With regard to the question of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, we cannot fail to note certain positive as well as negative events that have occurred during the past year. On the plus side, we have noted that following the Soviet moratorium of 1991, which was just renewed until the middle of 1993, the Government of France, on 8 April 1992, announced its suspension of nuclear testing for the remainder of the year. This decision is particularly significant as France is not a party to the partial test-ban Treaty and because it reflects an important shift from the position it has consistently taken on General Assembly resolutions concerning nuclear testing. If the current French moratorium is extended indefinitely, then the prospects for a comprehensive test-ban treaty will become brighter. It is also highly encouraging to note that the United Kingdom has not conducted any tests in 1992. Furthermore, I should like to refer to the imposition by the United States of a nine-month moratorium on testing, beginning next month, with restrictions on subsequent tests.

Unfortunately, however, on the negative side, it is disappointing to note that a nuclear Power recently conducted the largest nuclear test it has ever undertaken. A great sense of disappointment has also been generated by the failure of the Conference on Disarmament once again to go ahead with the adequate negotiating mandate in the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban. It is to be hoped that against the backdrop of the positive developments that I have just referred to, this situation will be rectified in the near future.

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

The President of the Amendment Conference was authorized by the Conference, and in the framework of General Assembly resolution 46/28, to undertake open-ended consultations to promote the implementation of the mandate entrusted to him. As a result of these consultations held early this month, it is envisaged that a meeting of brief duration could be convened during the second quarter of next year to review the developments concerning nuclear testing that have taken place both bilaterally and multilaterally, which could then look into the feasibility of resuming the work of the Amendment Conference at an appropriate time.

In the context of the wider process of nuclear-arms limitation, the non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) played a critical role in maintaining a viable regime for non-proliferation. The experience since 1970 has however shown its asymmetrical obligations, while its implementation has been largely one-sided. In such circumstances it is of the utmost importance that the nuclear-weapon States should discharge their responsibilities in good faith and in full. We have already heard a chorus of endorsement from interested countries for an indefinite extension of the Treaty. Any decision will ultimately depend upon an objective assessment and a fresh appraisal of the commitments undertaken by nuclear-weapon States. The year 1995, which also coincides with the fiftieth anniversary of the advent of the nuclear age, may well be the year of reckoning when the NPT will transform itself into a truly universal, non-discriminatory, non-proliferation regime.

My delegation has consistently endorsed a broad and comprehensive range of confidence-building measures. In the geographical context, and if such measures are adapted to the special characteristics and conditions of the region concerned, they will facilitate efforts to reach settlements of

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

regional conflicts and reduce the prospect of future conflicts. Such measures will also help ensure that the particular region remains free from outside interference, thus providing regional States with the opportunity to decide their destiny and build regional cohesion and resilience. Another essential element is mutual military restraint by non-regional Powers, especially in strategically important areas and waters. Finally, conditions of stability and mutual confidence can be ensured through joint regional endeavours in a spirit of common responsibility and amity.

The report of the Secretary-General entitled "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277) also called on regional organizations to consider the introduction of further confidence-building measures. The Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South-East Asia, entered into by the member States of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1976 and subsequently acceded to by Brunei Darussalam, Papua New Guinea, Viet Nam and Laos, is an important means of fostering confidence, mutual understanding and cooperation among States of the region. ASEAN has therefore decided to initiate the submission of a draft resolution on this Treaty in the firm belief that its adoption by the General Assembly would accord international recognition and support for the Treaty and to its purposes and principles.

In the context of prospective changes in the security situation in the Asia-Pacific region, ASEAN's approach, as reflected in the proposed Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality, remains of central validity and relevance. It represents a blueprint for a new framework for peace and cooperation, a new structure of cooperative relationships which will ensure greater stability and security in South-East Asia. It endeavours to address the increasingly complex geopolitical and strategic environment while taking into account the immense diversity in various spheres among the countries of the region.

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

The trade in armaments, euphemistically called arms transfers, has long been a critical element in global politico-military matters. The acquisition of large quantities of conventional arms represents an unconscionable misuse of resources in a world afflicted by hunger and poverty. Nor should we be oblivious of the known horrors of conventional wars fought with increasingly lethal, sophisticated weapons. There is indeed a continuing need to take a collective look at this problem as the questions involved are complex and can be viewed from many different perspectives while giving rise to different concerns.

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

In this regard my delegation views the Register on the transfer of arms primarily as an instrument for openness and transparency, and notes its potential to foster a climate of confidence and to constitute an integral part of broader arms limitation and disarmament efforts. But the present unconscionable level of trade in armaments, despite the palpable change in the global political and security climate, is directly attributable to a lack of self-restraint on the part of the supplier countries. This is fully evident in accelerated efforts in the sale of arms, especially to conflict-ridden areas. Hence, efforts to reduce and curb conventional and other armaments should be placed within a comprehensive context, focused on both supplier and recipient countries rather than on particular groups of countries, and should be directed towards the primary causes of the conventional arms race.

In conclusion, my delegation reaffirms the central role and primary responsibility of the United Nations in disarmament matters and its commitment to enhancing further the effectiveness of the multilateral disarmament process. When interdependence has grown to an unprecedented degree, disarmament, security, economic progress and sustainable development can be achieved only by widening the decision-making machinery and processes. The new global climate provides unprecedented opportunities to achieve these objectives. But we must demonstrate the vision that the opportunity requires and identify practical and forward-looking ways to proceed while recognizing that security and disarmament call for global, multilateral, regional and bilateral actions in unison with one another.

Mr. KUKAN (Czechoslovakia): Allow me, at the beginning of my statement, to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the important post of Chairman of the First Committee at the forty-seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly and to assure you, and the other members of the Bureau, of my delegation's determination to transform the favourable atmosphere currently prevailing in the sphere of arms control and disarmament into specific action-oriented conclusions of the Committee's deliberations.

The world of today is marked by highly dynamic development of a controversial nature. On the one hand, we have sincerely welcomed the end of its bipolarism and the democratic changes which affect the region of Central and Eastern Europe, and not that region alone. On the other hand, we are witnessing at the same time a number of negative phenomena, which have caused us to lose our initial euphoria and come down to Earth very quickly. At issue are the manifestations of ethnic intolerance, which in some cases have led to open, bloody violence and to the creation of new hotbeds of tension.

Armed conflicts lead not only to horrifying losses of human lives but also to great numbers of refugees, who have been expelled from their homes for ethnic or religious reasons. In many areas of the world these hotbeds of tension, which can give rise to open conflicts, still exist. To a large extent these tendencies undermine the positive results achieved since the end of the cold war.

The foreign policy of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic is the policy of a State situated, from the geopolitical point of view, in a highly exposed area. Need I mention the well-known statement by Bismarck that he who gets control over the Czech quadrangle dominates Europe? The highest priority of

(Mr. Kukan, Czechoslovakia)

our foreign policy is therefore to maintain and enhance the security of the new democratic Czechoslovakia.

As a small State we cannot rely on securing the country's safety through military measures nor do we want to do so. The only feasible way to achieve this goal is therefore to promote our security in conjunction with the security of others. From the moment the democratic State was restored, we have therefore been looking for a place in an all-European defence and security system.

In this century Europe has tried twice to redraw its political map. The Versailles system born after the First World War, based on the best intentions of the victors, could not, however, get rid of the nucleus of potential conflicts. The second attempt was made in Yalta, but that attempt also proved infeasible in the long run. Europe is now going to try to settle its affairs in a spirit of cooperation and by avoiding conflicts, which, in spite of that spirit and, as a semi-forgotten legacy of the past, are breaking out. If we look at the present situation in Europe we do not seem to have achieved results in the last three years that deserve our full recognition. Life proves however that impatience has no place in politics. Still, we are at the beginning of a rather difficult and long road. In Czechoslovakia we believe that Europe has already chosen the right path, further promoting the Helsinki process in conceiving the new architecture of Europe.

In our deliberations we are proceeding from existing European institutions, from the possibilities of their adaptation and development under new conditions that are conducive to cooperation. The process of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), which represents the only all-European forum and which also has its own transatlantic dimension, is

(Mr. Kukan, Czechoslovakia)

beginning to prove itself as a framework not only for European security but also for the integration of Europe. It also gives significant political impetus to the solution of grave and often pressing problems and to the development of specific forms of cooperation. It is open to interaction with other key European institutions. We believe that development of the European security system has progressed far enough not to be stopped within the borders of Europe and that this system must be incorporated into a global one with means to ensure its links with the United Nations system of collective security.

The Czech and Slovak Federal Republic has therefore submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session a proposal for the inclusion of a new item, "Coordination of the activities of the United Nations and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe". That item will be discussed in a plenary meeting of the General Assembly next week. Our aim is to promote the practical implementation of the declared understanding that the CSCE is a regional arrangement. At the same time, we are aware of the importance and priority of the obligations emanating from the Charter of the United Nations.

One of the great achievements of the all-European process is the conclusion of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). Through its implementation a significant reduction in the levels of armed forces and armaments is taking place in Europe. This process considerably decreases the risk of the outbreak of military conflicts among European States and strengthens the security of the whole continent.*

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* Mr. Suh (Republic of Korea), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

(Mr. Kukan, Czechoslovakia)

The Czech and Slovak Federal Republic has consistently fulfilled its obligations under that Treaty. The agreed-upon numbers of heavy weapons and military aircraft have been removed from the Czechoslovak army's arsenals. We accept regular inspection teams, and we ourselves take part in similar inspections based on the provisions of the CFE.

We believe that any attempt to obtain weapons of mass destruction represents an enormous threat to the international community. We therefore support the efficient implementation and improvement of existing international mechanisms aimed at preventing the proliferation of these weapons. At the same time, we strive for a maximum reduction in the current levels of nuclear arms and for the complete elimination of chemical weapons.

The basic internationally binding document that prevents the proliferation of nuclear weapons is the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons of 1968 (NPT). Since the NPT entered into force, it has fully proved its usefulness and irreplaceability. We assume that the Preparatory Committee of the 1995 extension Conference of the Treaty, as well as the Conference itself, will pay greater attention to the issue of safeguards agreements and of their observance. This was the area where the most serious problems occurred in the past. We believe that the countries that have not yet done so should accede to the Treaty. From this point of view, we welcome the accession of the People s Republic of China and of France. The Czech and Slovak Federal Republic is in favour of the universality and unlimited extension of the Treaty.

The question of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty is one of the most sensitive issues from the point of view of strengthening the non-proliferation regime. The need to ensure both security and political

(Mr. Kukan, Czechoslovakia)

interests has divided the international community more or less into two groups - countries preferring a step-by-step solution and those demanding an immediate ban on all nuclear tests. In the efforts to bypass this dilemma, we stress the further follow-up of the Amendment Conference to the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapons Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water (PTBT).

My country is one of those that consider the most feasible and practical way to be a step-by-step reduction in and cessation of all nuclear tests. We greatly appreciate the latest decision of United States legislators on nuclear testing, the moratorium of France, the halting of tests by the Russian Federation and the approach of the United Kingdom. This situation creates a favourable atmosphere and preconditions for further negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban Treaty.

Within the efforts to strengthen the non-proliferation regime, an important role is played by nuclear-weapon-free zones. The traditional position of Czechoslovakia in this regard is clear: we respect the status of existing, and support the creation of new, nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world. We sincerely welcome the result of the recent general conference of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL).

Effective prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is unthinkable without a control system of transfers of material, equipment and dual-purpose technologies in the nuclear, chemical and biological fields and in that of missile technology. This system is now composed of specialized organizations and mechanisms such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and its safeguards system, the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and the Australia Group. Czechoslovakia is taking an active part in their work.

(Mr. Kukan, Czechoslovakia)

At the last session of the London Club in March and April of this year in Warsaw, the States Members to the NSG confirmed, through the exchange of identical notes, their accession to the expanded control regime and their intention to anchor it by the end of 1992 in their national legislation. On April 4 1992, the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic officially acceded to the control regime of dual-purpose items in the nuclear field.

We are ready, not only through words but also through our deeds, to refute any accusations to the effect that these measures are of a discriminatory character. Their aim is in no way to hamper international trade in these commodities and respective technologies, but to prevent their possible misuse, which, in the long run, could lead to a breach of security on both the regional and global levels.

Undoubtedly, the most important event this year in the field of arms reduction is the drafting of the text of the Convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons, and on their destruction. States Members to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva have thus proved their political will to conclude such an agreement ar l their readiness to resolve even the most complex problems. We are convinced that the text of the Convention on chemical weapons is a fully balanced and realistic document, for it neither favours nor discriminates against anyone, but ensures equal security to all participants. This is manifested especially in its scale of verification measures that is unprecedented in the history of multilateral disarmament conventions and treaties and that should reliably secure the observance of all obligations and duties contained therein.

For the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, this important document is fully acceptable in its present form. We would therefore appreciate it if the

(Mr. Kukan, Czechoslovakia)

draft of the respective resolution was adopted first in our Committee and then in the plenary of the United Nations General Assembly by consensus. That would represent the best contribution to a successful outcome of the Conference of the signatories in Paris. The Czech and Slovak Federal Republic intends to take part in the Conference and, as we have stated repeatedly, it will become an initial signatory of the Convention. This political decision was also reflected in our co-sponsorship of the draft resolution. We hope that the already large group of sponsors will be joined by other States.

Czechoslovakia has consistently fulfilled its obligations under the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction. We are one of the signatories that regularly submit to the United Nations the requested information with a view to strengthening confidence-building measures. A coordinating group has been established in Czechoslovakia, with the aim of improving collaboration between the various sectors concerned with carrying out the provisions of the biological weapons Convention. The possibility of issuing procedural regulations in the area of the non-proliferation of biological material, equipment and dual-purpose technologies has been considered in accordance with the recommendations of the second seminar of the Australia Group, held in Paris in December 1991.

(Mr. Kukan, Czechoslovakia)

The well-known tragic events that took place in the Persian Gulf finally raised the question of the establishment of a non-discriminatory Register of Conventional Arms, which should contribute to transparency, openness and greater restraint by States in arms exports and imports.

Czechoslovakia fully respects this trend and is implementing it consistently in its foreign-policy activities. We participated in the preparation of a United Nations study on ways and means of enhancing transparency in international transfers of conventional arms; we were one of the sponsors of General Assembly resolution 46/36 L, entitled "Transparency in armaments"; and we were involved in the work of the panel of governmental technical experts, whose report, which recommends a standardized system of reporting to the Register, is ready for adoption.

The Czech and Slovak Federal Republic in the forum of the First Committee reiterates its appreciation of the activities of the United Nations in respect of this matter, to welcome the submission of the Secretary-General's report, and to pledge that it intends to act upon that report in the future.

Within the framework of efforts to make our military expenditures more transparent, we have, as in previous years, informed the Secretary-General of the extent of such expenditures. The 1991 figure, at Kcs 27,868 billion, was Kcs 4,420 billion lower than that for 1990.

In the field of arms control and disarmament my Government complies fully with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and discharges its international obligations completely. On the basis of the military doctrine of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic - a doctrine that is founded on the concept of defensive security - the political leaders of my country decided that there should be a substantial reduction in

(Mr. Kukan, Czechoslovakia)

Czechoslovakia's production and exports of weapons, especially heavy weapons. They strive to implement the military-production conversion programme without regard to the serious problems that it creates for Czechoslovakia in the economic and social fields. However, despite many declarations, efficient international cooperation in this field is still only an abstract notion.

The Czech and Slovak Federal Republic is ready to make a constructive contribution to the debate on the topical questions that the Conference on Disarmament is now facing. The Conference's agenda should not become a hostage of various approaches to the determination of priorities in arms control and disarmament. It should be balanced and should ensure that this forum does not fall behind what is going on in the world. We are in favour of a reasonable widening of the membership of the Geneva Conference.

The Czech and Slovak Federal Republic is paying appropriate attention to the work of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. We regard the adoption, by consensus, of the document on objective information on military matters as a successful test of the Commission's reforms. In spite of this undoubted success, it seems that the improvement in international relations is still manifested only gradually in changes in the positions of some of the States that have significant military potential. In this respect, the Disarmament Commission and other disarmament forums still face a challenging and difficult task.

As a result of the close cooperation between the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic and the Office for Disarmament Affairs, we invited and welcomed this year a group from the United Nations disarmament fellowship programme. This is our modest contribution to the training of young prospective specialists in the field of arms control and disarmament.

(Mr. Kukan, Czechoslovakia)

With regard to arms control and disarmament, the United Nations faces many tasks. At the same time we are fully aware of the fact that the processes that have been taking place in the world since the end of the cold war are complex and often painful. However, they give us a chance to take a step forward. If we are to do so, there will have to be an even greater willingness to take part in a matter-of-fact, constructive dialogue, and all States Members will have to be willing to make active use of all the possibilities that the United Nations system provides. We hope that the First Committee, in its work this year, will contribute to the attainment of this goal. The Czech and Slovak Federal Republic will make every effort to that end.

Mr. MAKKAWI (Lebanon): On behalf of the delegation of Lebanon I wish to congratulate my good friend and colleague Ambassador Nabil Elaraby on his election to the chairmanship of the First Committee of the General Assembly. His vast experience in the work of the United Nations and his high personal and academic qualities make him the natural choice to preside over this very important Committee. For years his friendly sister country has supported the cause of peace in the Middle East, and it comes as no surprise that it has championed the drive to establish in the Middle East a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction. Lebanon applauds the numerous and sustained endeavours made by Egypt and is truly pleased that Ambassador Elaraby is presiding over the work of this Committee.

Equally, we congratulate the other officers of the Committee, and we take this opportunity to welcome all new Member States to the Committee this year.

The end of the cold war and other significant global developments have given rise to a new idealism and a new spirit of commonality among Member

(Mr. Makkawi, Lebanon)

States. At last - about seven decades after the League of Nations took flight and then foundered, and nearly half a century after the lofty purposes and principles of the United Nations were enshrined in its Charter - humanity stands ready and, God willing, able to embark upon its true course. I know that, as members of the First Committee, we all have a serious responsibility for, and a special stake in, seeing that world order is achieved in its fullest sense. Fortunately, since we last met, global circumstances have been favourable, particularly with regard to the work of the Committee.

At the State level, the United States and Russia have reached historic agreements on bilateral reductions in nuclear arms, and the decisions taken by Russia and France to adopt moratoriums on testing have recently been augmented by similar United States legislation. China, France and South Africa have recently acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and Belarus, Kazakhstan and the Ukraine are expected to do so shortly. Also encouraging is the consolidation of effort exhibited by the Ukraine and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in respect of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

At the regional level, we have witnessed in two areas the setting of historic precedents towards achieving global non-proliferation through the creation of denuclearized zones. Under the aegis of Argentina, Brazil and Chile, the Latin American and Caribbean Member States have launched an initiative to ensure that the Treaty of Tlatelolco will be implemented in full. Meanwhile, the South Pacific nuclear-free zone, established by the Treaty of Rarotonga of 1985, has made a major contribution along similar lines, although a few States in that region have yet to become signatories.

(Mr. Makkawi, Lebanon)

At the global level, great strides are being taken towards the creation of a world free of non-conventional weapons. We anticipate that the 1995 Conference on the extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons will bring an indefinite extension of that Treaty and the adoption of a multilateral comprehensive nuclear-weapon-test-ban treaty. In addition, this year heralded significant initiatives in multilateral disarmament, including the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the draft Convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons.

Lebanon applauds all these developments as milestones on the road to a peaceful and war-free world. The Charter clearly confirms the integral relationship between disarmament and the maintenance of international peace and security, as set forth in Articles 11 and 26. These Articles stress the regulation of armaments - be they conventional or non-conventional - and require the establishment of a collective system of security guaranteeing the peace and stability of all nations. Of course, only one yardstick of international jurisprudence can be applied to that end. Those principles require a single standard in the implementation of all United Nations resolutions. We are committed to disarmament proposals which will provide security through equal obligations applicable to all States in all regions.

In this regard, Lebanon wholly supports the statement made on 12 October 1992 by the Chairman of the First Committee, particularly as it applies to Chapter VII of the Charter, to provide credible security assurances to those States who do not possess weapons of mass destruction. We believe that in order to induce nuclear-weapon States to demilitarize and to bolster the confidence of non-nuclear States, the Security Council must reaffirm its assurances that it will provide assistance to any victim of any act or threat of aggression involving nuclear weapons.

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Lebanon is neither a large nor a militarily powerful country. It has neither the capability, capacity nor desire to develop weapons of mass destruction, or conventional weapons for that matter. It has generally sought to provide for the security of its people under the auspices of the United Nations or through collective security arrangements approved by the United Nations. The presence of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon is a prime example of our reliance on and coordination with the international Organization.

In this regard Lebanon supports the production and acquisition of arms only in so far as they ensure, keep or restore international order. This sentiment is not only mentioned by the Secretary-General in "An Agenda for Peace" but it is also echoed by all small, developing countries which rely on international law as the basis for their protection. We believe that pending the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction, States possessing nuclear, chemical or biological weapons have an obligation not to use or threaten to use them against the rest of us.

I need not dwell on the fact that the arms race constitutes a huge drain on national and world economies, and that their budgets possess great potential. Resources released through disarmament and arms reductions can and should be redirected towards the social and economic development of all countries, and especially the developing world. Only by investing in the welfare of mankind as opposed to weapons of war can global problems such as poverty, economic malaise, overpopulation and environmental pollution be overcome.

We are pleased that for the first time the Committee is holding a single general debate on two inseparable issues: disarmament and international

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security. The vision of this approach is profound, and subsequently the path set before the Organization will be more clearly defined. Transparency in all military matters and the need for openness in dealing with arms transfers are the initial steps to be taken in conjunction with the institution of tough verification procedures. We are confident that, once universal compliance with the United Nations Arms Register is achieved, irresponsible vertical and horizontal arms proliferation will be reduced.

Concurrently, specific defence-industry conversion programmes must be developed at both State and international levels to enhance technological cooperation for peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Meanwhile, and until global disarmament is achieved, the threat of nuclear war exists despite the fact that all regions and peoples of this planet share a common future and destiny. We attach great significance to the fact that ours is a shared ecosystem and no country has a nuclear option against another. It is incumbent upon us all to put an end to regional conflicts so that we may divert our resources from armaments to economic growth and development - the true path to international security.

I would be remiss if I concluded without touching upon Lebanon's concerns that are of relevance to the Committee, specifically as it relates to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East. For its part, Lebanon has wholeheartedly supported this item since it was introduced at the United Nations.

Before going into specifics, I would like to emphasize that the term "nuclear-weapon-free zone" implies the fulfilment of certain basic objectives: first, all States possessing nuclear weapons must destroy them; secondly, no State may acquire or proliferate nuclear weapons; and, thirdly,

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all States must take the genuine decision to establish technological cooperation for peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

To that end, we must verify the process of halting the arms race. In particular, in the case of turbulent regions such as the Middle East, it is to the benefit of all States that a universal international verification system be applied. Each country possessing nuclear weapons must offer an open and honest appraisal of its capabilities through registration with the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Subsequently, it must sign the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons with a view to nuclear-arms limitation and reduction and the eventual phasing-out of all weapons of mass destruction.

Thus far all States in the Middle East possessing nuclear weapons have submitted to registration with the United Nations and the IAEA, with one exception. For decades one country has refused to admit possession of an extensive nuclear-weapons arsenal. While it has placed its nuclear energy reactor at Nahal-Soreq under IAEA safeguards, it has yet to admit the existence of its reactor at Dimona.

Meanwhile, Israel's possession of the atomic bomb is no secret to the world. If at any time this weapon is used, each and every person in our region would suffer either from direct devastation or from fallout. Indeed, any environmentalist would agree that the whole world would pay a dear price.

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Since all States in the area have declared themselves in favour of the creation of a nuclear-free zone, the questions to be asked now are how and under what conditions this zone might be established. Adherence to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) by all States of the region would be a most significant milestone. Pending such a measure, acceptance by Israel of IAEA safeguards on the Dimona facilities would be an important move towards establishing a nuclear-free zone and could be realized well in advance of that country's adherence to the NPT. Otherwise all efforts towards establishing a nuclear-weapon-free Middle East will be little more than an exercise in futility.

With guarded optimism, I would like to mention an auspicious situation in the region: namely, the present peace initiative on the Middle East, which was first launched in Madrid in October of 1991 and has subsequently evolved along both bilateral and multilateral tracks. This ongoing peace conference is potentially the dawn of a whole new era for the Middle East region and offers possibilities and potential for confidence-building measures and conflict resolution.

Accordingly, Lebanon has irrevocably committed itself to this peace initiative and to the principles and parameters on which it is based, including the urgent need to implement Security Council resolution 425 (1978). It is our understanding that the process will lead to full respect for Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. It is our greatest hope that the peace process will ultimately solve the Arab-Israeli conflict in all of its aspects.

Of course, the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East region is implicit in the achievement of a just, durable and comprehensive

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solution in the area. In this respect, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his vision in "An Agenda for Peace" and for its applicability to our particular regional problem, as well as for his report "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East" (A/47/387), where he stresses that a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East must come as a result of sufficient confidence-building among the principal actors of the region.

Towards that end, the peace conference is a significant point of departure. We trust that Lebanon and the rest of the Middle East will soon be part and parcel of the auspicious developments of our time.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): I would like to inform the Committee that Cuba has joined the list of sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.1, entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction".

The meeting rose at 12:45 p.m.